

Message Text

SECRET

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70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 SS-15 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 SAJ-01

DODE-00 H-02 NSC-05 EB-07 TRSY-02 MC-02 OMB-01 /087 W

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R 221850Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4096

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCLANT

USCINCEUR

USLOSACLANT

USNMR SHAPE

S E C R E T LONDON 13133

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MPOL, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: PROPOSED REDUCTIONS IN NETHERLANDS ARMED
FORCES

REF: STATE 198550

1. AS INSTRUCTED REFTTEL, EMBASSY OFFICER MET WITH
ALISTAIR HUNTER, ACTING HEAD WESTERN ORGANIZATIONS
DEPARTMENT (FCO), TO CONVEY THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH
WE REGARD THE PROPOSED NETHERLANDS FORCE REDUCTIONS,
DESCRIBE THE ACTIONS THE U.S. IS TAKING, AND SUGGEST THE
BRITISH ALSO REGISTER THEIR CONCERN WITH THE GON.

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2. HUNTER AGREED THE PROJECTED DUTCH CUTS WERE WORRI-

SOME AND PROMISED TO FORWARD TO HIS SUPERIORS OUR SUGGESTION FOR A BILATERAL BRITISH APPROACH TO THE GON. HE SAID MATTER WOULD BE DECIDED -- HE HOPED NEXT WEEK -- AT LEAST AT THE UNDERSECRETARY LEVEL, AND OBSERVED THAT UK DEMARCHE TO DUTCH ON THIS ISSUE AT THIS TIME WAS A BIT TRICKY. UK HAD AFTER ALL ONLY RECENTLY COMPLETED ITS OWN DEFENSE REVIEW, WHICH RESULTED IN SIGNIFICANT CUTS IN PROJECTED DEFENSE SPENDING, AND IF "THE DUTCH ARE THE BLACK SHEEP OF THE ALLIANCE, THE BRITISH ARE DARK GRAY". MOREOVER, HUNTER CONTINUED, THERE ARE ELEMENTS WITHIN THE LABOR GOVERNMENT THAT WOULD LIKE TO SEE FURTHER REDUCTIONS IN UK DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AND THUS WOULD WISH TO AVOID CRITIZING THE GON FOR GOING DOWN A ROAD THEY CONTINUE TO FIND ALLURING. ALTHOUGH HUNTER WAS CONFIDENT THAT SUCH EROSION ELEMENTS WOULD NOT UNDERMINE THE WILSON GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION AND ESPECIALLY THAT OF DEFENSE SECRETARY ROY MASON, TO MAKE THE 1974-75 DEFENSE REVIEW ITS LAST, CARE WOULD HAVE TO BE TAKEN TO AVOID WAVING TOO BRIGHT A RED FLAG AT THEM.

3. COMMENT: OUR JUDGMENT IS THAT EVEN IF THE BRITISH AGREE TO EXPRESS THEIR CONCERN TO THE GON BILATERALLY AS WE HAVE ASKED, IT WILL BE IN THE MOST MUTED MANNER, AND WE FEAR THE ECHO WOULD BE FAINT AT NATO.

RICHARDSON

SECRET

NNN

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